

**In the Claims:**

Please cancel claim 21. Please amend claims 9 and 18. The claims are as follows:

1-8. (Canceled)

9. (Currently amended) A method for selecting a voice prompt of an interactive voice response system that operates according to the compiled code of an application program that provides call flow instructions for the interactive voice response system, the method comprising the steps of:

receiving commands from a telephone caller;

responsive to said received commands, determining that the voice prompt is needed;

responsive to said determining that voice prompt is needed, providing a variable associated with identified with a function of the voice prompt by the application program;

assigning a first value to the variable by accessing an assignment table that is held outside the compiled code of the application program;

identifying a first database record that includes a digitally encoded voice prompt consisting of a first bit pattern that consists of a first contiguous sequence of bits, wherein the bits of the first sequence of bits are stored contiguously in the identified first database record, and wherein said identifying the first database record is implemented through use of the first value which selects the first database record and specifies the first bit pattern;

reading the identified first database record;

passing the first bit pattern from the first database record that had been read to an audio apparatus;

performing, by the audio apparatus, a digital-to-analog conversion of the first bit pattern that had been passed to the audio apparatus; and

speaking, by the audio apparatus, a first message to [[a]] the telephone caller, said first message consisting of the digital-to-analog converted first bit pattern.

10-13. (Canceled)

14. (Previously presented) The method of claim 9, wherein the voice prompt pertaining to the first bit pattern in the first database record consists of music, and wherein said speaking the first message comprises speaking the first message consisting of the digital-to-analog converted first bit pattern as said music.

15. (Previously presented) The method of claim 9, wherein the voice prompt pertaining to the first bit pattern in the first database record consists of an audio tone, and wherein said speaking the first message comprises speaking the first message consisting of the digital-to-analog converted first bit pattern as said audio tone.

16. (Canceled)

17. (Previously presented) The method of claim 9, wherein the voice prompt pertaining to the first bit pattern in the first database record consists of a sequence of beeps, and wherein said speaking the first message comprises speaking the first message consisting of the digital-to-

analog converted first bit pattern as said sequence of beeps.

18. (Currently amended) The method of claim 9, wherein the method further comprises:

assigning a second value to the variable by accessing the assignment table, wherein the second value of the variable differs from the first value of the variable;

replacing the first value of the variable in the assignment table with the assigned second value of the variable;

identifying a second database record that includes a digitally encoded voice prompt consisting of a second bit pattern that consists of a second contiguous sequence of bits wherein the bits of the second sequence of bits are stored contiguously in the identified second database record, and wherein the second bit pattern differs from the first bit pattern, and wherein said identifying the second database record is implemented through use of the second value which selects the second database record and specifies the second bit pattern;

reading the second database record;

passing the second bit pattern from the second database record that had been read to the audio apparatus;

performing, by the audio apparatus, a digital-to-analog conversion of the second bit pattern that had been passed to the audio apparatus; and

speaking, by the audio apparatus, a second message to [[a]] the telephone caller, said second message consisting of the digital-to-analog converted second bit pattern.

19. (Previously presented) The method of claim 18, wherein said assigning the second value and

said replacing the first value with the second value are performed by an interactive voice response (IVR) system administrator.

20. (Previously presented) The method of claim 19, wherein said replacing the first value with the second value by the IVR system administrator does not comprises using special IVR programming skill to replace the first value with the second value.

21. (Canceled)

22. (Previously presented) The method of claim 18,

wherein the voice prompt pertaining to the first bit pattern in the first database record is spoken by a first speaker;

wherein the voice prompt pertaining to the second bit pattern in the second database record is spoken by a second speaker;

wherein said speaking the first message comprises speaking by the first speaker the first message consisting of the digital-to-analog converted first bit pattern; and

wherein said speaking the second message comprises speaking by the second speaker the second message consisting of the digital-to-analog converted second bit pattern.

23. (Previously presented) The method of claim 18,

wherein the voice prompt pertaining to the first bit pattern in the first database record is spoken by a male speaker;

wherein the voice prompt pertaining to the second bit pattern in the second database record is spoken by a female speaker;

wherein said speaking the first message comprises speaking by the male speaker the first message consisting of the digital-to-analog converted first bit pattern; and

wherein said speaking the second message comprises speaking by the female speaker the second message consisting of the digital-to-analog converted second bit pattern.

24. (Previously presented) The method of claim 18,

wherein the voice prompt pertaining to the first bit pattern in the first database record has a first level of formality;

wherein the voice prompt pertaining to the second bit pattern in the second database record has a second level of formality that differs from the first level of formality;

wherein said speaking the first message comprises speaking the first message consisting of the digital-to-analog converted first bit pattern having the first level of formality; and

wherein said speaking the second message comprises speaking the second message consisting of the digital-to-analog converted second bit pattern having the second level of formality.

25. (Previously presented) The method of claim 18,

wherein the voice prompt pertaining to the first bit pattern in the first database record is spoken by a speaker in a first wording and conveys a meaning;

wherein the voice prompt pertaining to the second bit pattern in the second database

record is spoken by the speaker in a second wording that differs from the first wording and conveys said meaning;

wherein said speaking the first message comprises speaking by the speaker the first message consisting of the digital-to-analog converted first bit pattern in the first wording that conveys said meaning; and

wherein said speaking the second message comprises speaking by the speaker the second message consisting of the digital-to-analog converted second bit pattern in the second wording that conveys said meaning.